

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SEOUL 00173 092345Z

72

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 DLOS-06 COA-02 EB-11 COME-00 CG-00

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /126 W

----- 057259

R 090904Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1951

JCS WASHDC

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CINCPAC

CINCUNC SEOUL

COMNAVFORKOREA SEOUL

S E C R E T SEOUL 173

JOINT EMBASSY/UNC MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, KS, KN

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH ROKS ON NORTHWEST COAST QUESTIONS

REF: SEOUL 8696

1. SUMMARY: WE BELIEVE IT NECESSARY THAT ROKS FACE PROBLEMS POSED BY NORTHWARD MOVEMENT OF SPRING FISHING AND BY OPERATIONS WITHIN THE NORTH'S CLAIMED TWELVE MILE LIMIT, EXCEPT IN CONNECTION WITH ACCESS TO ISLANDS, AND WE PLAN TO RAISE THESE QUESTIONS WITH THEM. END SUMMARY.

2. AS INDICATED REFTTEL, WE BELIEVE THAT NEXT STEP WITH REGARD TO NORTHWEST COASTAL WATERS QUESTION SHOULD BE INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH ROKS ABOUT WHERE WE GO FROM HERE. QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED ARE: A) WHAT TO DO THIS SPRING ABOUT CUSTOMARY ANNUAL EXPANSION IN VICINITY YONPYONG DO OF SOUTH KOREAN FISHING GROUNDS INSIDE NORTH KOREA'S CLAIMED TWELVE-MILE TERRITORIAL LIMIT; B) WHAT TO DO ABOUT MORE GENERAL TERRITORIAL WATERS QUESTIONS, WHICH INCID-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 SEOUL 00173 092345Z

ENTALLY WILL BE COMING UP AT LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE; AND C) IN

LATTER CONTEXT WHAT TO DO ABOUT ROK NAVAL PATROLS AND COMMERCIAL FISHING WITHIN OUTER REACHES OF CLAIMED NK TERRITORIAL SEAS BETWEEN THE TWO ISLAND GROUPS.

3. TRADITIONALLY, EACH APRIL 30 SOUTH KOREAN FISHERMEN EXPAND THEIR FISHING GROUNDS NORTHWARD IN AREA SOUTH OF YONPYONG-DO FROM 37 DEGREES 30 MINUTES WINTER FISHING LINE TO LINE RUNNING THROUGH 37 DEGREES 30 MINUTES NORTH, 125 DEGREES 00 MINUTES EAST; 37 DEGREES 37 MINUTES NORTH, 125 DEGREES 43 MINUTES EAST; AND 37 DEGREES 30 MINUTES NORTH, 126 DEGREES 01 MINUTES EAST. DESPITE FACT IT HAS OCCURRED ANNUALLY, MOVEMENT OF FISHING BOATS TO THESE SUMMER LIMITS THIS YEAR WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE LABELLED PROVOCATION BY NORTH, PARTICULARLY SINCE ROK NAVAL VESSELS WOULD ALSO HAVE TO MOVE INTO AREA TO PROTECT FISHERMEN. MOREOVER, IN VIEW GROWING SUPPORT WORLDWIDE FOR TWELVE-MILE LIMIT, MANY NATIONS WOULD SHARE NORTH'S VIEW THAT THIS WAS UNCALLED FOR PROVOCATION. UNC MILITARY ESTIMATE IS THAT KNP AND ROK NAVAL FORCE, ALREADY STRETCHED TO LIMIT OF CAPABILITIES, COULD NOT PROVIDE EFFECTIVE SECURITY EVEN IF THEY DID FOLLOW FISHERMEN INTO AREA, AND CONSEQUENT VULNERABILITY OF FISHING BOATS WOULD INCREASE LIKELIHOOD OF AN INCIDENT BY OFFERING TEMPTING TARGETS TO NORTH. ACCORDINGLY, WHILE IT WILL BE BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY DIFFICULT FOR ROKS TO CURTAIL TRADITIONAL FISHING, RISKS CLEARLY OUTWEIGH BENEFITS IN THIS CASE AND WE BELIEVE ROKS SHOULD BE URGED TO KEEP FISHERMEN SOUTH OF THEIR WINTER FISHING LINE.

4. AS FOR BROADER QUESTIONS ON TERRITORIAL SEAS, WE SEE THESE LARGELY AS ROK CONCERNS WHICH FOR MOST PART KOREANS SHOULD ADDRESS THEMSELVES. WE DO HAVE SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST HOWEVER, IN OPERATIONS WITHIN OUTER REACHES OF NORTH'S TWELVE-MILE CLAIM. THE OVERLAP OF ROK NAVAL PATROLS AND WINTER FISHING WITH THE NK TWELVE-MILE LIMIT WAS IN PAST SMALL (A TRIANGLE BASED ON 37 DEGREES 30 MINUTES NORTH, BETWEEN 125 DEGREES 00 MINUTES EAST AND 125 DEGREES 30 MINUTES EAST, WITH APEX AT 37 DEGREES 25 MINUTES NORTH, 125 DEGREES 15 MINUTES EAST). DEFENSIVE TACTICS ADOPTED SINCE THE OSA MISSILE LAUNCHERS MOVED INTO THE AREA IN QUESTION, HAVE CURRENTLY REDUCED OVERLAP TO ZERO. IT IS ALSO A FACT THAT THE NK HAVE NEVER MOVED THEIR PATROLS DOWN INTO THE AREA IN QUESTION, AND HAVE ONLY ONCE OPERATED IN A MANNER CONSIDERED PROVOCATIVE TOWARDS THE AREA. THIS DOES NOT HOWEVER, ALTER THE FACT THAT ROK

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 SEOUL 00173 092345Z

CLAIM, AS CONTRASTED WITH ACTUAL CURRENT OPS, EXTENDS TO NLL, AND THAT WITHOUT EXTERNAL PUSH THEIR RECOGNITION OF TWELVE-MILE LIMIT CLAIM BY NK IS NOT LIKELY TO BE MUCH CHANGED BY LOS CONFERENCE RESULTS.

5. PUT IN MORE SPECIFIC TERMS, FORMAL PROPOSALS THAT THEY NOT ON ANY OCCASION GO INSIDE NORTH'S CLAIMED TWELVE-MILE LIMIT IN AREAS NOT RELATED TO UNC ISLANDS OR ACCESS THERETO WILL BE DIFFICULT

FOR ROKS TO ACCEPT, PARTICULARLY IN CASE DESCRIBED PARA 4 WHERE THEY WILL HAVE TO CHANGE EXISTING PATTERNS. CERTAINLY FIRST REACTION AMONG SOME WITHIN ROKG WILL BE TO RESIST PROPOSALS AS SHOW OF WEAKNESS. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, PREDOMINANT AND PROVEN ROK VIEW FAVORS PRUDENCE ON NW COAST ISSUE. AT SAME TIME, BECAUSE THESE QUESTIONS INVOLVE ROK FISHING RIGHTS AND LONGER TERM TERRITORIAL ISSUES OF CONCERN ESSENTIALLY TO KOREA AND BECAUSE WE ARE NOT ANXIOUS TO PUT STRAIN ON OUR COMMAND RELATIONSHIP, WE BELIEVE THESE ARE DECISIONS ROKS SHOULD MAKE THEMSELVES.

6. GIVEN THESE CONDITIONS, WE BELIEVE OBLIQUE, SUGGESTIVE APPROACH TO A DISCUSSION OF THESE ISSUES HAS MOST LIKELY CHANCE OF SUCCESS. WE PLAN TO BEGIN BY SIMPLY PUTTING QUESTION TO ROKS WHETHER TO MOVE FISHING LINE NORTH ON APRIL 30. IN DISCUSSING RELEVANT FACTORS, WE WILL POINT TO DIFFICULTIES OF EXTENDING PROTECTION AND INCREASED PROBABILITY OF AN INCIDENT.

7. WE WILL RAISE SECOND QUESTION REGARDING TERRITORIAL LIMITS AND SPECIFICALLY ACTIVITIES ALONG OUTER EDGES OF NORTH'S CLAIMED WATERS, BY FIRST BRINGING UP LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE AND ASKING WHAT ROKS PROPOSE TO DO IN NLL AREA IF, AS SEEMS POSSIBLE, LOS CONFERENCE ADOPTS UNIVERSAL TWELVE-MILE LIMIT. WHEN ASKED, WE WOULD PROPOSE TO POINT OUT INFORMALLY THAT RECOGNITION OF ROK SOVEREIGNTY OVER UN CONTROLLED ISLANDS AND ADOPTION OF TWELVE-MILE RULE PLUS MEDIAN LINE PRINCIPLE THROUGH NORTH AND SOUTH NEGOTIATIONS WOULD RETAIN SUBSTANTIAL PORTION TRADITIONAL FISHING GROUNDS FOR SOUTH AND WOULD OTHERWISE REPRESENT GOOD COMPROMISE.

8. SINCE ROK ACTIVITY ALONG OUTER FRINGE TWELVE-MILE LIMIT BETWEEN THE ISLAND GROUPS HAS IN FACT CEASED, WE DO NOT INTEND TO RAISE THIS POINT DIRECTLY AT THIS TIME, SO AS NOT TO CREATE AN ISSUE BETWEEN UNC AND ROK WHERE NONE NOW EXISTS. ANY FUTURE ROK MOVE TO CHANGE THIS STATUS QUO WILL HOWEVER BE DISCOURAGED.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 SEOUL 00173 092345Z

ERICSON

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TERRITORIAL WATERS, TERRITORIAL SEA LIMIT, FOREIGN RELATIONS, WATER BOUNDARIES, FISHING BOATS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SEOUL00173
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SEOUL JOINT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740153/aaaabyct.tel
Line Count: 155
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: SEOUL 8696
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISCUSSION WITH ROKS ON NORTHWEST COAST QUESTIONS
TAGS: PBOR, KS, KN, US
To: STATE JCS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005